

From: Brandon R. Butler
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 10:16am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Dear sirs:

I am writing this to express my opposition to the proposed settlement to the Microsoft antitrust suit.

As a computer professional, this issue is one that is very important to me both personally and professionally. It is my opinion that the proposed settlement does not do enough to thwart Microsoft's unfair business practices or to ensure fair competition in the marketplace. As the situation exists now, Microsoft has been utilizing their monopoly in operating systems to unfairly gain control of other markets, such as Internet browsing, instant messaging, and digital audio. This is the situation that a reasonable settlement must address, and I do not believe the current proposed settlement has any real power to restrict Microsoft's illegal actions in this area. In order to be effective, a solution must prevent Microsoft from tying (or "bundling") unrelated software into their operating systems; this is the only way to ensure that all competing products, including Microsoft's, have an opportunity are evaluated fairly by a competitive market on the merits of the products themselves. The current settlement has no real power to do this, and thus will be ineffective in correcting Microsoft's illegal practices.

I am not opposed to Microsoft; anybody who wishes to use Microsoft products should have the free choice to do so, as is proper in a free nation. However, the problem is that people who choose to use non-Microsoft products are severely limited in their options because Microsoft uses illegal tactics to stifle competition. The day that one person can run a fully function system using Microsoft technology, and another person can run an equally functional system using no Microsoft technology at all, will be the day that this suit is settled adequately --- not before.

Sincerely,
Brandon R. Butler
Ridgeland, MS